

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1 – 13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (new) A method of limiting a rate at which a connection is serviced at a queuing point for a plurality of connections, the method comprising:

arranging messages from the plurality of connections into a plurality of queues;

determining whether a connection, of the plurality of connections, exceeds a rate limit defined for the connection;

determining, using a shaper, when the queue containing a message for that connection is to be serviced if the connection exceeds its rate limit;

otherwise determining, using a fair scheduler, when the queue containing the message for that connection is to be serviced.

Claim 15 (new) The method as defined in claim 16 wherein the plurality of connections have traffic descriptors associated therewith.

Claim 16 (new) The method as defined in claim 17 wherein the traffic descriptors include the rate limit.

Claim 17 (new) An apparatus for limiting a rate at which a connection is serviced at a queuing point for a plurality of connections, comprising:

a means to arrange messages from the plurality of connections into a plurality of queues;

means for determining whether a connection of the plurality of connections, exceeds a rate limit defined for the connection;

means for determining, using a shaper, when the queue containing the message for that connection is to be serviced if the connection exceeds its rate limit; otherwise determining, using a fair scheduler, when the queue containing the message for that connection is to be serviced.

Claim 18 (new) The apparatus as defined in claim 16 wherein the plurality of connections have traffic descriptors associated therewith.

Claim 19 (new) The apparatus as defined in claim 17 wherein the traffic descriptors include the rate limit.